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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

School Board Member Pleads Guilty to Fraud, Theft Charges

(Phoenix, Ariz. – Aug. 28, 2007) Attorney General Terry Goddard today announced that Sadie Tso, 53, a member of the Red Mesa Unified School District Governing Board, has pleaded guilty to attempted fraud and facilitation of theft. Tso entered the pleas Monday before Apache County Superior Court Judge Michael Roca.

According to court documents, Tso, of Teec Nos Pos, pleaded guilty to improperly using her position to approve settlement payouts to William Bean, 52, former Red Mesa Unified School District Superintendent, and Stewart Waite, 35, former Red Mesa Unified School District Business Manager, after they resigned from their positions.

She also admitted to attempting to deceive the State Auditor General who was conducting an investigation of alleged financial improprieties within the District Business Office. Tso agreed to resign her position on the Governing Board within 10 days and will not run or accept appointment to any public office in the future. She also agreed to pay restitution of almost \$325,000.

In April 2007, Tso was indicted with Bean, 52, and Waite, 35, on theft and fraud charges. Waite and Bean were indicted for allegedly using district credit cards for personal benefit.

The Red Mesa Unified School District is located in Teec Nos Pos in Apache County. It serves approximately 900 students from kindergarten through high school.

Tso has agreed to cooperate with the State and will not be sentenced until the prosecution of Waite and Bean has been concluded. Assistant Attorney General Paul Ahler is prosecuting this case. Waite and Bean are awaiting trial.

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